



Department of Planning, Housing, & Community Development

Mayor, Richard C. David

Acting Director, Jennifer Taylor

TO: City Council Members
FROM: PHCD Staff
DATE: April 7, 2014
RE: Comprehensive Plan and Main & Court Corridor Plan – Public comments received 03/24/14 through 04/04/14

Comment 1: Received via email on 03/24/14 from Steven Bard (sbard@binghamton.edu)

I was not able to find anything about bike access to SUNY Broome (BCC). Although that institution lies outside Binghamton City limits many students and staff will need to travel through town to get there. Everyone would benefit from cooperation between city and town.

Comment 2: Received via email on 03/26/14 from Russ Shattan (rshattan@mcrdevelopmentllc.com)

I was recently driving through downtown Binghamton on my home to New York City and I noticed that there appeared to exist a nice green space block downtown bordered by Susquehanna Street, Washington Street, Shore Drive, and State Street. What initially looked like a nice park, on closer observation, was actually a form of no-mans-land that had existed to surround a circular turning lane / on-ramp for cars driving west on Shore Drive to turn right and come south over the State Street bridge to cross the Susquehanna River.

When I viewed the area closely, I noticed that this on-ramp is actually an unnecessary / duplicative function, and that drivers wishing to make the same turn could simply use the existing street grid (right on Washington Street to right on Susquehanna Street to right on State Street) to execute the exact same traffic maneuver.

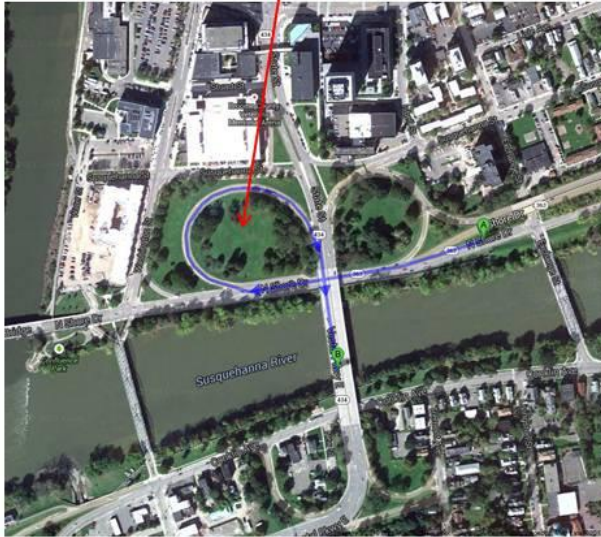
By removing the on-ramp within that block, all of sudden the community could provide for itself a nice tree-lined park or green space which in effect, essentially already exists. I have no business in Binghamton, I was simply driving through, but when I looked twice and questioned the necessity of this duplicative on-ramp, I felt I had to bring it to someone's attention. Perhaps your community is already aware of this and good reason exists for that block to house a duplicative on-ramp and not a community green space, but I thought it was worth mentioning just in case.

In the attached one-page slide, I illustrated with some arrows and points how removing the dedicated on-ramp would not change the traffic pattern but would open up a nice green space block to area residents and businesses.

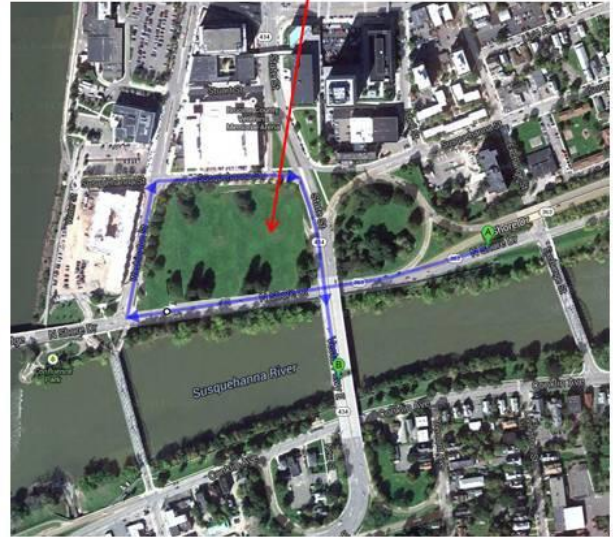
if you have any questions about the attached, please give me a call, I would be happy to discuss my thought / concept here.

Thanks
Russ Shattan
[see image below]

Useless, inaccessible no
man's land



Valuable park, recreation
space, and neighborhood
amenity



Comment 3: Received via email on 03/31/14 from Pamela Mischen (pmischen@binghamton.edu)

I've been reading over the Blueprint Binghamton plan and am very impressed. It is well-researched, well-presented, and reflects the amazing amount of citizen participation that you had in the process. With my "professor" hat on, I give you an "A".

Thinking forward a little, here is a website that I came across today that might be a good way to engage citizens in the implementation of the plan. <http://www.portlandonline.com/portlandplan/?c=49008&>

Cheers,

Pam
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Page 21, figure 66 - Future Land Use Map: Recommendation #1 - First Ward at Ridge St, Packard St, and Lagrange St. - Several acres and several homes in this immediate area belong to me and my family. All the houses in the area are very old, and most are situated on lots with 50' frontage. Former Mayor Ryan let previous Mayor Bucci's rezoning plan happen the January after he was first elected; likely without even realizing what was going on. This changed the zoning from R-3 to R-1. Now "Estate Residential" is planned for future use. #1/2 - 1 Ridge Street was approved years ago for another 4-unit townhouse, and parking for Penny Lane. It is a part of the original town-house development. I think it was even rezoned commercial to accommodate the development at the time. These properties are adjacent to Penny Lane Townhouses, "Utilities", and the future Interstate 88. What a beautiful view of the noise barriers from our Estate Homes! The properties are located at or near the exit ramp of an interstate highway. Does it sound like the highest and best use of this real estate will be Single-family or Estate Residential? I don't think so. I had interest from a federal agency regarding possibly locating office space there because it was out of the flood zone. Mayor Ryan's office never returned my calls, and my lawyers expressed concerns regarding the zoning causing delays. That particular short window of opportunity came and went. However according to Representative Hanna's office there might be another chance in the future, when current leases expire. I have previously attended and spoke at a City council meeting, and have provided written statements to the DOT during the numerous public meetings regarding the highway project. Maybe the new mayor will be able to think outside the proverbial box of downtown-only development. Recommendation: Rethink this immediate area for better use of some of this land. It looks like spot-zoning now anyway. Thank You R. Zavada Jr.
